Information Technology was held on 21.2.2000 in New Delhi. The suggestions made by the Committee include: Upgrading existing leading 43 Engineering Colleges/Regional Engineering Colleges as IIT type Institutions of higher learning and excellence in Information Technology, extending the 5 year tax holiday-concession for IT enabled services, Department of Telecommunications to provide facilitation framework to promote the IT enabled services, promotion of venture capital on the lines of mutual funds industry, double taxation avoidance totalisation agreement with USA and Action Plan to implement suggestions from the Government and the Industry in a time bound manner.

(c) The Information Technology Bill has been introduced in Lok Sabha on 16.12.99 to provide legal recognition for transactions carried out by means of electronics data interchange and other means of electronic communication, commonly referred to as "electronics commerce". The first report of the National Task Force on Information Technology (IT) containing 108 recommendations have been accepted by the Government. The recommendation in the second and third report are under consideration of the Government.

Framing of Information Security Policy

1580. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that with rapid growth of Internet activities and its utilisation of public network calls for an immediate formulation of Information Security Policy and framing of cyber laws so as to punish the guilty who are indulging in internet related crimes;

(b) if so, by when this information security policy is going to be framed; and

(c) by when the cyber laws, so essential in the circumstances, will be formulated?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) A Bill in this regard known as The Information Technology Bill, 1999 has been

introduced in Lok Sabha on 16.12.1999 to provide legal recognition for transactions carried out by means of electronic data interchange and other means of electronic communication, commonly referred to as "electronic commerce".

Improving the Internet Service in North-Eastern Region

1581. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA:
SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether necessary steps have been taken by Government to improve internet service in the North-Eastern Region;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government propose to provide more servers in Assam for better internet service considering the increased demand;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) At present, Department of Telecommunication Services (DTS) internet nodes are operational at Guwahati and Silchar. In addition, Direct PC system have been provided at each National Informatic Centre (NIC) district unit at the district Headquarters of 67 districts of the North-Eastern States for internet browsing. E-mail services already available in all the district headquarters and the State Capitals. Education and Research Network (ERNET) India, an autonomous society under Minsitry of Information Technology has already connected Tezpur University, Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, North Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology, Itanagar and Centre of Computer Communication Technology, Sikkim on Education and Research Network (ERNET).

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Yes, Sir.